

May 21, 1878.

F. D. Godman, Esq., F.Z.S., in the Chair.

The following papers were read :—

1. Description of a new Genus of Snakes of the Family *Calamaridæ*, from Southern India. By Lieutenant-Colonel R. H. BEDDOME, C.M.Z.S.

[Received April 29, 1878.]

XYLOPHIS, n. gen.

Body cylindrical, slender; head short, not distinct from neck, gradually narrowed forwards and pointed; eye very small, with round pupil; tail about one seventh of the total length; maxillary teeth very numerous, equal; the two palatine rows very conspicuous, and the teeth slightly longer behind; upper labials four, the first very minute, the second and third enter the orbit, fourth in contact with a large temporal; rostral very small; an elongate loreal gradually narrowed behind replaces anteocular and occupies all the space from rostral to eye; nasals simple, very small; frontals only one pair, large, a very small superciliary shield and a similar postocular. Scales smooth, without apical groove, in fifteen rows; anal single; subcaudals broad, bifid, or a few occasionally entire.

XYLOPHIS INDICUS, n. sp.

General colour of a uniform brown like an earthworm, but beautifully iridescent; length $9\frac{1}{2}$ inches, of which the tail is $1\frac{2}{3}$ inch: vertical, pointed behind, rounded in front; occipitals elongate; ventrals about 136; subcaudals about 26, bifid, or a few of them entire; tail ending in a blunt point.

Hab. The dense heavy evergreen forests on the mountains at the south of Cumbum Valley, Madura district; elevation 5000 feet. Under old logs along with *Uropeltidæ*.

The specimen, which is unique, has been forwarded to the British Museum.

2. Reports on the Collections of Birds made during the Voyage of H.M.S. 'Challenger.'—No. X. On the Birds of the Atlantic Islands and Kerguelen's Land, and on the Miscellaneous Collections. By P. L. SCLATER, M.A., F.R.S.

[Received May 2, 1878.]

In this paper, which concludes the preliminary reports on the terrestrial birds collected during the voyage of the 'Challenger,' I

give an account of the specimens obtained on the Tristan-d'Acunha group and Kerguelen's Land, and of a few small collections made at various other localities which were touched at during the course of the expedition. I have arranged all these, according to the dates at which the places were visited, as follows:—

	Date.	No. of specimens.
A. St. Iago, Cape-Verds	July 1873	4
B. Tristan d'Acunha	October 1873	12
C. Kerguelen Land	January 1874	16
D. New Zealand	June 1874	4
E. Hong-Kong	December 1874	7
F. Meangis Islands	February 1875	3
G. At sea	February 22, 1875	2
H. Humboldt Bay, New Guinea . .	February 24, 1875	2
I. At sea	April 7, 1875	5
J. Japan	May 1875	4
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A. St. Iago, Cape-Verds (July 1873).

Four examples of the peculiar King-hunter of this Island, *Halcyon erythrogastra* (Temm.), Sharpe's Kingf. p. 171, pl. 63, were obtained here. In one specimen the eyes are marked "black," and the contents of the stomach "insects."

B. Tristan-d'Acunha group (October 1873).

Seven examples of the peculiar Thrush of Tristan d'Acunha, described by Mr. Gould, P. Z. S. 1855, p. 165, as *Nesocichla eremita*, were obtained. The sexes are not marked; but the specimens are all nearly alike, so that probably the sexes do not differ in plumage. The irides are noted as "black."

In the adjoining island "Inaccessible," five specimens of the peculiar Finch lately described by Dr. Cabanis (Journ. f. Orn. 1873, p. 154) as *Nesospiza acunhæ* were obtained. All five are alike; the eyes are marked "hazel;" but the sexes are not recorded.

Of *Crithagra insularis*, described by Dr. Cabanis at the same time as the *Nesospiza*, there is no specimen in the collection, nor of the Island-Hen (*Gallinula nesiotis*, Sclater, P. Z. S. 1861, p. 261). The latter is said to be now almost extinct¹.

The only oceanic birds in the collection from the Tristan-d'Acunha group are two Petrels, *Pelagodroma marina* and *Æstrelata mollis*, both from Nightingale Island, the most southern of the three islands of the group, and one Penguin (*Eudyptes chrysocome*) from Inaccessible; but Sir Wyville Thomson (Atl. ii. pp. 164, 178) mentions several others.

C. Kerguelen Land (January 1874).

The only land-birds from Kerguelen Land in the collection are

¹ Wyville-Thomson, 'Atlantic,' ii. p. 165.

nine specimens of *Chionis minor* and seven of *Querquedula eatoni*; and these are the only land-birds included by Mr. Sharpe in his memoir in the Royal Society's volume on the Transit-Expedition of 1875.

The female of the *Querquedula* (of which there is one example determined as such, and two others, evidently of the same sex) differs from the male not only in the absence of the green alar speculum, but also in its smaller size, in the fuscous edgings to the feathers generally, and in the much shorter tail. There is also one chick of this species in the collection.

D. *New Zealand* (June 1874).

In New Zealand only four skins, belonging to three species, were obtained, namely:—

- 1 *Miro albigrons* jr., Hardy Bay.
- 2 *Hæmatopus unicolor* jr., Hardy Bay.
- 1 *Botaurus pœciloptilus* jr., Wellington.

E. *Hong-Kong, China* (January 1875).

From Hong-Kong seven skins, belonging to four species, all known Chinese birds, were procured, viz:—

- 1 *Turdus mandarinus*, Bp.
- 1 *Halcyon pileata* (Bodd.).
- 2 *Alcedo bengalensis*, Gm.
- 2 *Coturnix communis*, Bonn.
- 1 *Turnix maculosus* (Temm.).

F. *Meangis Islands* (February 1875).

Four examples of *Eos indica* were obtained here (of which three have arrived home), under the circumstances mentioned in Mr. Murray's MS., as follows:—

"On the 10th February, 1875, while the ship was dredging, some natives came off in a boat. They had with them mats and cocoanuts and some Perroquets. The following are those which were purchased for tobacco:—

- | | |
|----------|--|
| "440, ♀. | } Feet black; bill orange; eyes red, or light brown in the male. |
| 441, ♀. | |
| 442, ♀. | |
| 443, ♂. | |

"We kept the male for several days alive; he used to fly about the ship and return to the house on deck when shown his food.

"He died from eating some green stuff, it is supposed, but was perhaps hurt aloft.

"The natives came from the southermost isle of the Meangis group."

This is the most northern species of *Eos* known; its hitherto only ascertained locality is the neighbouring Sanghir group of islands².

¹ Cf. also Lord G. Campbell's 'Log-letters' p. 245.

² Cf. Rowley's Orn. Misc. p. 123, where a beautiful figure of this species is given.

G. *At sea* (February 22, 1875).

Two examples of *Phalaropus hyperboreus* in winter plumage (nos. 445, 446, both "females") were "shot by Mr. Moseley on February 22, 1875, among the drift wood." Mr. Murray "saw many the previous day."

This Phalarope is said to wander occasionally even as far south as the Aru Islands¹. The present examples were obtained the day before the ship arrived at Humboldt Bay, New Guinea.

H. *Humboldt Bay, New Guinea* (February 23, 1875).

At this most interesting locality but two birds, unfortunately, were obtained, namely:—

447. *Trichoglossus cyanogrammus*, Wagl.

448. *Arses insularis*, Meyer.

The first of these is a well-known Papuan species. Of the second (shot by Mr. Murray under the circumstances mentioned in Lord George Campbell's 'Log-letters,' p. 253) the only specimens yet known were obtained by Dr. A. B. Meyer on the island of Jobi². Its occurrence on the mainland is therefore of much interest.

Mr. Murray notes of this specimen, "Male; eyes brown; ring round the eye large and of a delicate sky-blue; bill and legs of a darker blue or violet.

"I landed in Humboldt Bay from the pinnace in a native canoe; and with some of the natives went a short way into the woods. Was not much over half an hour on shore. It was then that I shot the above two birds. I saw a Tern and a small Swift, also some Cockatoos, but all out of shot. I fired at another small bird, but did not get it. I also saw three Goura Pigeons, very fine large ones, and after a time got a shot at one, but did not bring it down. I should have had several more birds, but had to return to the boat on the signal."—J. M.

I. *At sea* (April 7, 1875).

Four days before arriving at Yokohama, and nearly due south of that port, five specimens of *Hirundo gutturalis*, the eastern form of our familiar *H. rustica*, were "caught round the ship. They were apparently in an exhausted state."

J. *Japan* (May 1875).

In Japan four specimens of birds were obtained—an example of *Buteo japonicus*, Bp., in Jedo Bay, and a hen *Phasianus versicolor* and two specimens of *Terekia cinerea* from the Inland Sea.

¹ Cf. Dresser, B. Europe.

² *Monarcha insularis*, Meyer, Sitz. Ak. Wien, lxxix. p. 395.